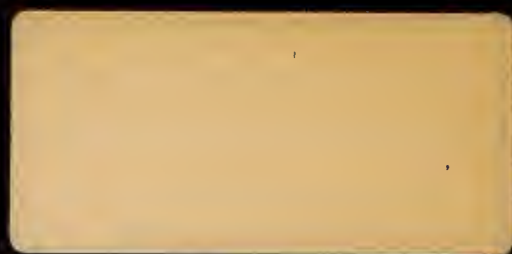


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**WORCESTER
STATE
COLLEGE**

486 Chandler Street

Worcester, MA 01602-2597

Office of the President

February 14, 1994

Dr. Piedad F. Robertson
Secretary of Education
One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
COLLECTION

MAY 12 1994

University of Massachusetts
Depository Copy

Dear Dr. Robertson,

I am pleased to submit an application for the establishment of a Charter School in Worcester following the guideline and provisions of the Education Reform Act of 1993. Our intent is to establish the School with the beginning of the Fall 1995 date even if the current regulation is changed to allow opening of schools in 1994. Our reason is primarily based upon the amount of time we need to plan and organize the School. The application, therefore, has addressed Part 1 of the guideline.

Please be advised that the Worcester State College Board of Trustees has unanimously agreed to explore the development of a charter school and has authorized me to do so. Following that decision of the Board, we are conducting serious discussions with Worcester Public School authorities to adopt one of its existing schools to be converted into a charter school. Obviously, we will engage in serious planning over the next eighteen months should you respond to our proposal in the affirmative. We will further submit far more detailed plans as required in Part 2 and Part 3 as we move along.

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to apply and I look forward to hear from you.

Sincerely,

Kalyan K. Ghosh
President

enc.

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Education

Charter School Application

I/We, the undersigned charter school applicant(s), do hereby certify that the information provided herein and filed with the Executive Office of Education on this the 12th day of January (month) of the year 1994, is to the best of my/our knowledge, truthful and accurate.

(This signature sheet *must* be attached to the application when it is filed.)

Name:	Signature:	Date:
Address:	City:	State:
		Zip:
		Tel:
Name:	Signature:	Date:
Address:	City:	State:
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If more space is required, please attach additional sheets.

Executive Office of Education, One Ashburton Place, Room 1401, Boston, MA, 02108

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Executive Office of Education

Charter School Application Designated Contact Person

Please provide the Executive Office of Education with the following information identifying a designated contact person for the group submitting an application for charter school status. This form *must* be filed along with the charter school application no later than February 15, 1994. Please mail all required materials to:

Secretary of Education
ATTN: Charter Schools
Executive Office of Education
One Ashburton Place, Room 1401
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

Tel: (617) 727-1313

Please print or type:

Worcester State College

Name of organization/group filing for charter school status

Contact Person Name:	Dr. Kalyan K. Ghosh	
Signature:	<i>Kalyan K. Ghosh</i>	Date: 2 /14 /1994
Title:	President, Worcester State College	
Address:	486 Chandler St.	
City:	Worcester	
State:	Massachusetts	
Zip:	01602	
Telephone:	(508) 793-8020	
Fax:	(508) 793-8191	

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WORCESTER STATE COLLEGE

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION: PART 1

RECEIVED

OFFICE OF
EDUCATION

Submitted to:
Secretary of Education
Executive Office of Education
One Ashburnham Place
Room 1401
Boston, Massachusetts
02108

February 14, 1994

WORCESTER STATE COLLEGE

CHARTER SCHOOL APPLICATION: PART 1

1. Mission Statement

Following the provisions of Massachusetts Education Reform Act of 1993, Worcester State College wishes to establish a Charter School as a pilot to address a variety of problems public education faces today. These problems, identified in the literature and below, clearly stand in the way of providing quality education, and intellectual and personal development to young children.

Philosophy, Purpose and Mission

Needless to say, education in American schools in general and public schools in particular has deteriorated to a level that puts the nation at risk in terms of an educated populace. Further, should it continue on its present course an uneducated populace will lead to social disaster and the degeneration of American society. If the current course is not altered, today's young generation will face adulthood with little or no hope for a better economic, personal, or social life for themselves. Moreover, without a productive citizenry the country as a whole will face enormous social, economic, and political ramifications.

More often than not, the problems of schools have heretofore been blamed on the narrow and short-sighted grounds and by pointing fingers mostly at the schools themselves. The fact is that schools merely reflect the steady deterioration of the American family and the American society itself. The problems the schools face today are terribly complex, multifaceted, and multidimensional that are beyond the control of the educators and school systems. The reversal of the situation, therefore, requires a rather complex, multifaceted and multidimensional solution rather than a simplistic

teacher and teaching improvement model.

The *purpose* of the proposed Charter School is to engage in an experimental approach by integrating education, family and the community through a responsible partnership. This will require a coordination of schools, families, community, higher education, and the state and local family social service providers at a different level than currently exists. The task is daunting but any approach short of that may only lead to a shallow and short range solution to the current problem in education and child development in this country.

The Mission of the proposed school is therefore stated as follows: Firstly, it is to maintain high academic and student performance standards in basic academic subjects. Cognitive learning shall be self-paced, accelerated, and engaging, and instruction in subjects will be integrated. A variety of learning strategies, including the use of educational technology, will be geared fittingly to each child's learning style. The curriculum will promote creativity, physical, and practical skills through classroom and co-curricular activities.

In addition to educational and intellectual development of all students, the schooling will instill societal and personal values, and develop personal character through a disciplined but caring environment. Through a variety of instructional and co-curricular activities, a sense of citizenship, responsibility to people, nature, and the environment, and moral and ethical dimensions of human society will be stressed.

The School will establish a strong linkage with each family and the community. Further, it will establish integrated linkage programs in support of personal and social needs of the children and of the family in partnership with social and health service agencies.

The mission of the School will also be to establish a strong partnership with the higher education community and the Worcester

area Colleges in particular. The partnership will provide the benefit of educational research for proven education strategies in this country and abroad through a continuous professional development of teachers. The two-way feed back will transform the teacher education curriculum at the Colleges in preparing quality teachers of the future.

Finally, the ultimate mission and purpose of the School will be to catalyze change and enrich Worcester's public education system through a continuous process of emulating and adopting good practices derived out the pilot program.

2. Objectives

A. Academic

1. To establish and require high academic standards of performance of all students in each class group comparable to the achievement level of students at other developed and industrialized nations in the world in key subject areas, at a minimum.

2. To require of all students a common core of learning basic to scholastic development in key subject areas. The common core of learning will consist of: English and Foreign Language, Mathematics, Physical and Life Sciences, History, Civics and Government, Geography, Physical and Health Education, and Visual and Performing Arts.

3. A variety of learning strategies will be offered to fit to the varied learning styles of the pupils at their respective developmental stages through the aid of instructional technology, and of open-ended, self-paced, discovery based, and accelerated learning methods. Hands on experiences, community learning by student groups and similar approaches will also characterize the instructional strategy rather than pure lecture or rote learning.

B. Non-academic Objectives for Student Performance

1. To establish integrated service linkages with state and local service agencies in support of personal, health and other needs of children and their families, particularly for those from low-income groups.

2. To provide a series of co-curricular activities to develop and foster individual character and personality, leadership, a sense of values, ethics, responsibility, and citizenship in students.

3. To provide a parental education program, where appropriate, for the parents to assume responsibility for the education of their children. In some instances parents may require further education to complete a high school diploma or a college degree.

4. To establish a strong linkage with the community through a variety of extension programs in garnering community involvement and support to enhance student performance. Worcester State College has been very successful in working with business with the Career Beginnings Program, and this experience suggests community involvement is both achievable and helpful for student success.

C. School Community Environment

1. To foster an all out teaching-learning atmosphere within the school community.

2. To establish an academic partnership between the teachers, parents, community residents and the College in fostering education, student performance and mutual support.

3. To assure a safe and secured environment conducive to children's education and intellectual growth.

4. To foster an environment of individual responsibility, and accountability of teachers and students, of mutual respect and human caring, and of a sense of common goals and direction.

3. Statement of Need

A. American public schools are riddled with a myriad of problems stemming from a variety of complex social, political, economic, demographic, and family problems. An increasing number of children are being raised under the conditions of poverty, broken families, single and working parents, parents with inadequate means including unemployment, homelessness, substance abuse, physical abuse, societal and neighborhood violence, and lack of parental care. Such conditions put these children in an adverse condition non-conducive to their intellectual or social development. And yet, no attempt is being made in our public education system for service integration among agencies providing personal and social services with the schools. It is needless to say that the schools are not equipped with resources nor do the teachers have the knowledge or the time to address complex personal needs of a great many children in the schools.

These negative social conditions are further compounded by the inadequacy of the schools in addressing the changing learning needs of a contemporary child raised in a complex personal and technological world. Many students fail to acquire rudimentary knowledge and skills in basic subjects such as mathematics and sciences, literature and language, in geography, history, politics and government. This fact clearly suggests the inadequacy of American public schools. Competence of American students in Mathematics and Sciences in particular has proved to be far below their counterparts in other industrialized nations of the world. This condition places the United States at a disadvantaged situation in terms of its current and

future economic competitiveness with those nations.

Students' incompetence in mathematics and sciences is often related to the teachers' lack of preparation in mathematics and sciences. Many schools are characterized by a stagnant and inadequate core curriculum in developing basic academic competencies. This situation is further compounded by ineffective and outdated teaching strategies that do not address the learning needs of pupils who come from diverse socio-economic and multicultural backgrounds and who present a wide spectrum of learning styles and learning needs. Current teaching methods seldom attempt to nurture the natural curiosities of children and guide them to learn and to grow in the direction of their natural talents, interests, and aptitudes.

A serious problem of schools is associated with the gradual separation of schools from higher educational institutions. Higher education is not doing a credible job in preparing teachers for today's schools. As a matter of fact, the Educational Reform Act of 1993 is conspicuously silent on the role of higher education in school reform, and yet common sense dictates that one can not improve schools without the improvement of teacher preparation in the colleges. The two sectors are so far apart at the current time, that if the differences between the two are not bridged, there is a great danger that the current reform efforts will unravel before making any headway on the serious under achievement problem of American students, warns the American Association of Higher Education. In order to overcome this possibility, we must no longer think K-12 and Higher Education as separate systems, but we must begin to think and to adopt one continuous K-16 system.

All problems considered, radical changes are needed in the way the schools educate children and the way the colleges prepare teachers. The political system under which the schools are governed are immune to change and the change process. This is why a charter school that addresses the existing conditions of schools and the children described above, and develops a coordinated education and

support system in collaboration with higher education may pave the way for a transformed public education.

B. The Charter School proposed here shall be a pilot experimental School that will aim at the personal, social, intellectual, and character development of children. This will be accomplished by innovative teaching/learning strategies utilizing school-college collaboration, and by addressing the children's and the families' needs through school-service agencies integration. The Charter School and the College will work as one integrated K-16 entity with a spontaneous two way feedback system to induce innovation and research by the college faculty for effective teacher preparation, and with on-going professional development of teachers to apply new knowledge and strategy in the School. As stated before, because of the rigid governance bureaucracy and deficient curriculum offerings, existing public schools are not capable of designing a school that will address the students' needs effectively. This is why the proposed charter school which will operate separately under its own governance structure to provide the solutions addressed earlier. In the long range, the public schools will benefit from the experience derived from the Charter School.

4. School Demographics

Unlike many other charter schools one significant character of the proposed School will be that it will be a standard neighborhood school currently operating within the Worcester public school system. It will serve the existing student population which is racially diverse, culturally and socio-economically mixed. The students' scholastic abilities are as diverse as they are in any urban neighborhood community school. Purposefully, it will not be a school for the gifted or selected. It will thus make it easier to transfer the successful innovations to the entire school system.

Preliminary discussions with Worcester Public School authorities have led to the identification of a K-6 school located in a

neighborhood not far from the College. If this school is given the status of a Charter School through a special arrangement (which is under discussion and consideration) to separate its governance from the local school committee, the School will represent a student population that experiences many of the problems associated with schools mentioned heretofore. This School will be a perfect case for the pilot in addressing a variety of problems through a coordinated approach. If this arrangement does not work out, an alternate site will be sought for a new school which will focus on similar problems to affect similar solutions.

The anticipated enrollment of the proposed school will be 300 students covering K-6 grade levels. Approximately 50 students will be in each grade level.

5. Recruiting and Marketing Plan

If the existing school is converted to a Charter School by special arrangement, which is currently under discussion, then no special recruitment and marketing plan is necessary. However, a thorough information and public relations program including neighborhood meetings will be launched with the parents and the community in which the school is located. The nature of the meetings will be to present and to discuss the clear and complete understanding of the School's purpose, its educational programs, and parental and community responsibilities, as well as the proposed administrative and governance systems.

6. Admissions Policy

There shall be no special admissions requirement to attend the school other than what is necessary under the public school system.

7. Profile of Founding Coalition

The School will have its own governing Board comprising teachers, college professors and administrators, parents, community and business leaders, and public school administration representatives. There shall be a partnership between the Charter School and Worcester Public School Administration on one hand and the College on the other. Such a partnership will be guaranteed for at least a five year period to give the School sufficient autonomy and governance authority to innovate and administer.

8. Timetable

Spring 1994:

(1) Continued discussion with School Committee members and School Superintendent on the adoption and special arrangement to release the school from the jurisdiction of the School Committee.

(2) Simultaneous investigation of alternate sites.

(3) Establishment of a Charter School action planning group from the public schools, the college, and the community.

Summer 1994:

(1) Formalization of the site and partnership relations with the School Committee and the School Administration

(2) Creation and appointment of the Governance Board.

(3) Initiation of logistical planning with respect to personnel, facility, finance, fund raising, policies and procedures.

(4) Continuation of activities from the spring 1994.

Fall 1994:

(1) Completion of School governance by-laws, Board policies and procedures.

(2) Appointment of an education design committee to engage in the development of educational and co-curricular programs, student performance, and the School's mission evaluation strategies.

(3) Appointment of a technology group to plan instructional technology and assessment of cost.

(4) Appointment of a finance committee to assess the finance and budgetary need on a five year projection.

(5) Appointment of an human resource committee to develop policies and procedures pertaining to personnel recruitment and development.

(6) Appointment of a service integration team to explore service integration programs and possibilities.

(7) Conducting periodic meetings with parents of prospective students and community groups.

(8) Continuation of activities initiated in the summer of 1994

Spring 1995:

(1) Full scale implementation activities by all committees on all logistical details for the School to start in the Fall of 1995.

(2) Appointment of school principal and key teaching personnel.

(3) Securing funding for the School for 1995-96 year.

(4) Completion of all partnership details with the local school administration on items such as busing, custodial services, etc.

(5) Securing final approval of the Secretary of Education for the approval of the Charter School.

(6) Completion of all logistical details leading to the opening of the School.

End of Application

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